GEORGIA DOT BRIDGE #201-00091-01541N
Spanning Big Drain Creek at State Route 91
Colquitt Vicinity
Miller County
Georgia

HAER No. GA-78

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Georgia DOT Bridge #201-00091-01541N

HAER No. GA-78

Location: Spanning Big Drain Creek on State Route 91, east of Colquitt, Miller County, Georgia

UTM: Northing-3451460 Easting-721470
Quad: Colquitt, Georgia

Date of Construction: 1940

Engineer/Builder: Designer - Georgia Highway Department
Engineer - C. N. Crocker
Builder - Georgia Highway Department, Atlanta, GA

Present Owner: Georgia Department of Transportation
#2 Capitol Square
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Present Use: Vehicular bridge, to be demolished in 1993

Significance: GDOT Bridge #201-00091-01541N is significant in the areas of transportation and engineering. It is a continuous-stringer type bridge. Continuous steel stringers are commonly found in Georgia. It is one of approximately 560 bridges of this type found throughout the state and one of five found in Miller County, built prior to 1952. This bridge is also representative of those building during the 1930s which utilized treated-timber pilings in the substructure and concrete deck and railing in the superstructure.

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Date: September 1992

Georgia DOT Bridge #201-00091-01541N, constructed in 1940, is located on State Route 91 at Big Drain Creek, east of Colquitt. The bridge, which has a timber substructure, is known as a continuous-stringer type with steel I-beams. it is 80 feet long and 24 feet wide, with approaches having 22 feet of pavement and 5-foot sboulders on 100 feet of right-of-way.

Georgia DOT Bridge #201-00091-01541N is one of many of its type built by the State Highway Department during the 1930s. Prior to 1930, a variety of bridge types, styles, and materials were used. Beginning around 1930, the State Highway Department began to use a somewbat standardized form for most new bridges wbicb used timber pilings in the substructure. As stated in the Fourteenth Report of the State Highway Board (1932), "on numerous occasions wbere the bridge site warranted a low cost structure without sacrificing strength or durability, a type of bridge was constructed consisting of treated timber pile substructure with I beam joists and concrete floor slab and rail. This type proved very economical and satisfactory" (p. 167). Less expensive than steel or reinforced concrete, wood substructures enabled the department to satisfy transportation needs throughout the state and resulted in a dramatic increase in bridge construction.

The demands for material and manpower during the Second World War practically stopped the construction of bridges in Georgia from 1942 to 1945. Only essential projects providing access to war-related industries and roads on the Strategic Highway Network were placed under construction. In the post-war years, timber was no longer used as a bridge-building material by the department. According to the Twenty-Second Report of the State Highway Department (1947-1948), "timber of sizes and stress grades required for the construction of timber bridges has all but disappeared from the local market. Delivered price of timber shipped from the Pacific Coast is too high for consideration. It has, therefore, been necessary for the Division of Bridge and Road Design to develop a design for a low-cost bridge built of available material that will meet the need formerly filled by timber bridges. This design provides a bridge of steel and concrete, stronger and durable than timber bridges and costing but a small fraction more" (p. 59).

Timber substructures are an identifying characteristic of many of the bridges built in Georgia from 1930 to 1942. It was also during this time that reinforced concrete balustrades, with horizontal and/or vertical members, emerged as a popular material for bridge railing. Concrete balustrades, with horizontal members resembling a fence rail, sucb as those found on the subject bridge, were used extensively through the 1950s and 1960s.

Sources:

State Higbway Board of Georgia. Fourteenth Report of the State Highway Board. 1932.

State Higbway Department of Transportation. Twenty-Second Report of the State Highway Department. (1947-1948)